

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 120780

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INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 /013 R

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DRAFTED BY:S/NM:RADUGSTAD:OSG

APPROVED BY:S/NM:DHERNST

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MEXICO IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 120780

FOR MINISTER THOMPSON

FOLLOWING REPEAT DEA 11215 ACTION SECSTATE MAY 17.

QUOTE: UNCLAS DEA 11215

SECSTATE ATTN: MR. SOBIEN FOR IMMEDIATE ATTN OF MR. DICK DUGSTAD.

FOLLOWING IS A PRESS RELEASE PASSED FOR YOUR IMMEDIATE INFO:

QUOTE:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SUNDAY, MAY 16, 1976

MEXICAN ARMY TROOPS SEARCHING THE SIERRA MADRE MOUNTAINS
50 MILES NORTHWEST OF ACAPULCO HAVE DISCOVERED THE WRECKAGE OF
A SMALL DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION (DEA) PLANE THAT CRASHED
INTO THE SIDE OF A 12,000 FOOT MOUNTAIN PEAK.

THE SMALL PLANE MISSING SINCE FRIDAY WHEN IT DEPARTED
ACAPULCO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON ROUTINE LIAISON FLIGHT
REVIEWING THE MEXICAN ERADICATION PROGRAM, WAS SPOTTED EARLY
SUNDAY MORNING BY GROUND TROOPS WHO HAD BEEN COMBING THE RUGGED
TERRAIN SINCE LATE FRIDAY. THE MEXICAN TROOPS REPORTED THERE
WERE NO SURVIVORS.

THE CREW OF THE SINGLE-ENGINE, SIX-SEAT DE HAVILLAND BEAVER
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PAGE 02 STATE 120780

AIRCRAFT INCLUDED TWO DEA SPECIAL AGENTS AND AN OFFICER OF THE

MEXICAN FEDERAL JUDICIAL POLICE. THERE WERE:

-DEA SPECIAL AGENT JAMES T. LUNN, THE PILOT, 34, OF 5516 BROADMOOR AVENUE, MISSION, KANSAS. A DEA AGENT FOR FOUR YEARS, LUNN WAS AN EXPERIENCED PILOT AND FORMER CIVILIAN FLIGHT INSTRUCTOR FOR THE U.S. AIR FORCE. HE ALSO FLEW DC-7S AS A COMMERCIAL PILOT PRIOR TO JOINING DEA. MARRIED AND THE FATHER OF TWO SONS, MARK, 14, AND LARRY, 12, LUNN WAS BORN IN KANSAS CITY, MO. HE WAS A U.S. AIR FORCE VETERAN AND A GRADUATE OF CENTRAL MISSOURI STATE COLLEGE. HIS PARENTS ARE MR. TED LUNN OF DENVER, COLORADO, AND MRS. EMMA BOGARD, OF LINWOOD, KANSAS.

-DEA SPECIAL AGENT RALPH N. SHAW, 41 OF DEL NIDO APARTMENTS, EL CENTRO, CALIFORNIA, WHO HAD WORKED ON THE MEXICAN BORDER SINCE 1962 WHEN HE JOINED THE U.S. IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE AS A BORDER PATROL INSPECTOR. HE TRANSFERRED TO DEA'S PREDECESSOR AGENCY, THE BUREAU OF NARCOTICS AND DANGEROUS DRUGS, IN 1968. A NATIVE OF BUFFALO, N.Y. AND A MARINE CORPS VETERAN, SHAW WAS A GRADUATE OF SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY COLLEGE. HE WAS NOT MARRIED. RALPH SHAW'S PARENTS ARE MR. AND MRS. KENNETH CHARLES SHAW, OF 113 FLORIDA ST., BUFFALO, N.Y.

-MEXICAN FEDERAL JUDICIAL POLICE OFFICER NOE INCHAUSTEGUI.

FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS HAVE NOT YET BEEN COMPLETED FOR THE THREE OFFICERS. MEXICAN ATTORNEY GENERAL PEDRO OJEDA-PAULLADA, WHO HAS EXPRESSED HIS CONDOLENCES TO THE U.S. EMBASSY IN MEXICO CITY, HAS ARRANGED FOR A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION OF THE CRASH BY MEXICAN AUTHORITIES.

THE INTENSIVE AIR AND GROUND SEARCH HAD BEEN HAMPERED BY A HEAVY HAZE HANGING OVER THE MOUNTAINS SINCE THE DAY THE PLANE WAS REPORTED MISSING. THIS HAZE HAD LIMITED THE USE OF ALL AIRCRAFT EXCEPT HELICOPTERS ON FRIDAY AND MOST OF SATURDAY. MEXICAN HELICOPTERS REACHED THE CRASH SCENE SUNDAY AFTERNOON AND CONFIRMED THE IDENTITY OF THE PLANE.

"SPECIAL AGENTS LUNN AND SHAW WERE DEDICATED NARCOTIC LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS INVOLVED IN A DIFFICULT INTERNATIONAL EFFORT TO REDUCE THE FLOW OF HEROIN INTO THIS COUNTRY," SAID PETER B. BENSINGER, ADMINISTRATOR OF THE U.S. DRUG ENFORCEMENT UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 120780

ADMINISTRATION.

"THEIR LOSS IS A TRAGEDY TO THEIR FAMILIES, TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AND TO ALL OF US. WE EXTEND OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHIES TO THEIR FAMILIES AND THE FAMILY OF MEXICAN FEDERAL JUDICIAL POLICE OFFICER NOE INCHAUSTEGUI," HE SAID.

"THE COMMITMENT OF THESE NARCOTIC OFFICERS TO ENGAGE IN

THE FIGHT TO STOP THE FLOW OF HEROIN RESULTED IN THEIR DEATH.
WE DO NOT YET KNOW THE CAUSE OF THE CRASH. THAT WILL BE DETER-
MINED. WE DO KNOW, "SAID BENSINGER," THAT OUR EFFORTS MUST CON-
TINUE."

CONTACT: JAMES J. JUDGE (301) 299 8783 NIGHT
(202) 282 7524

END QUOTE.

NEAL, PAUNQUOTE KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AIRCRAFT ACCIDENTS, PRESS RELEASES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 MAY 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE120780
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: S/NM:RADUGSTAD:OSG
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760190-1017
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760545/aaaabmtd.tel
Line Count: 124
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SNM
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CollinP0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 JUL 2004 by wolfsd>; APPROVED <13 JAN 2005 by CollinP0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: n/a
TAGS: SNAR, EAIR, MX, DEA
To: MEXICO
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006